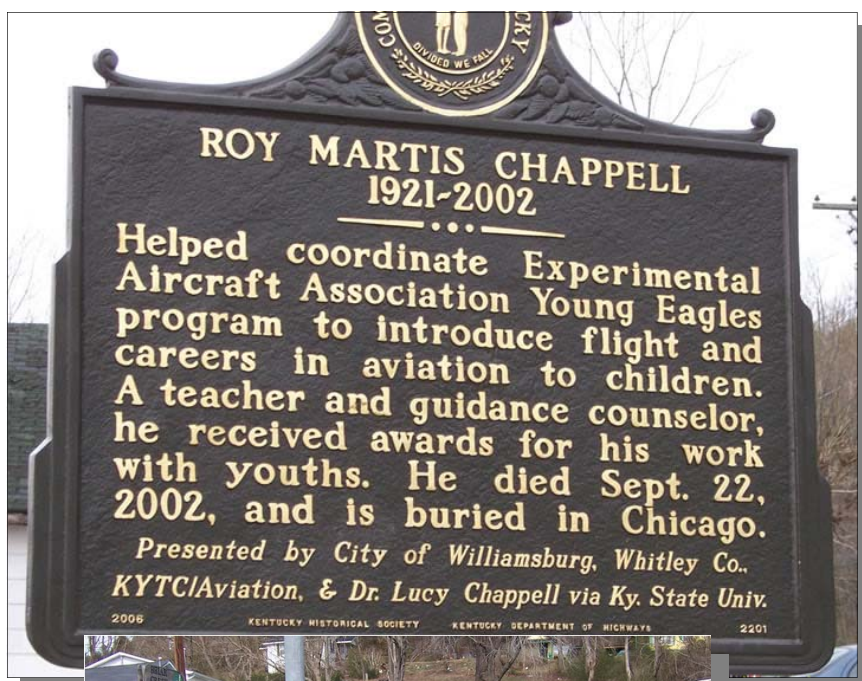


Roy Martis Chappell honored with Historical Highway Marker



L to R: Daughter Kathy Chappell, Dr. Lucy Lang Chappell, Representative Charlie Siler

A Kentucky historical highway marker was unveiled in a special ceremony at Briar Creek Park in Williamsburg, February 10. On a windy overcast day more than 100 were in attendance for the ceremony to celebrate the life of Roy M. Chappell. Local and state officials including Representative Charlie Siler paid tribute to the man who made history in the name of freedom, education and equality. A native of Williamsburg and KY State University student, he was a World War II Tuskegee Airman and B-25 navigator and bombardier who participated in the 1945 “Freeman Mutiny” where 101 African-American officers fought inequality by entering a segregated officers’ club. This action was considered treason during a time of war, Chappell was discharged from the military but his efforts combined with those of the other soldiers led to the end of military segregation by President Harry S. Truman three years later.

Dr. Lucy Lang Chappell, widow of the late Roy Chappell was dressed in her husband’s bomber jacket, the same coat he wore as he fought for freedom on foreign ground more than fifty years ago. Ms. Chappell proudly spoke of her husband’s trials and triumphs, how he helped coordinate the Experimental Aircraft Association Young Eagles program to introduce flight and careers in aviation to children. A teacher and guidance counselor, he received awards for his work with youths. Ms. Chappell said, “He led by example, was a true survivor and never spoke a curse word. He was an officer and a gentleman.”

Hickory Street, where Roy Chappell was born in Williamsburg, was renamed Roy M. Chappell street the same day.

Roy Chappell died Sept. 22, 2002 and is buried in Chicago.